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Editorial Notes and Comment



WE are sorry to see that the great Baptist Tabernacle in Atlanta is said to be in trouble. This great building with its large congregation was the result of the work of Dr. Len G. Broughton, who was a most popular preacher and pastor. Dr. J. L. White has just resigned its pastorate. He says he found only 600 members in this church when 1,500 was the number reported. He found a debt on the church of \$85,000, which the church cannot pay, and on which they cannot even pay the interest. He says that unless they can get help on the outside, the Tabernacle will have to be sold. A church that is built up around a man is not likely to be very strong, though for a time it makes a show of great strength and large numbers. When the Brooklyn Tabernacle was burned and Dr. Talmage resigned its pastorate it was reported to have 4,300 members. Presbytery could only find about 300 members to whom it could give letters to other churches when this one was dissolved. A church should be built upon great principles and these should be instilled into the membership. Then can stability be hoped for, and only then.

THERE have appeared in India what are known as mass movements toward Christianity. In some places large parts of the population are asking admission into Christian churches. A recent report of the work of the Methodist Church in that country has been received. After thirty years of work that Church had received only 3,000 members. For several years it has received about 25,000 a year. Last year 35,000 were baptized; 40,000 others were denied membership, because they had not been given the training necessary, and there were still 152,000 others, who as inquirers were waiting in vain for teaching as to the way of life. How white the fields are to the harvest, but the reapers are too few.

NORTHERN people are learning what the South has always known, that social equality between the white and the black races in this country is not desirable, though it has taken some of them a long time to find it out. The Continent quotes with approval a statement made by Rev. Francis J. Grimke, pastor of a Negro Presbyterian Church in Washington. When asked if he "insisted on social equality, by which is meant intermarriage of the races," he replied: "Have you ever seen any statement of mine in any shape or form intimating in any way that such a thought was even remotely in my mind? You seem entirely unconscious of the fact that colored people have some self-respect; you seem to be possessed with the idea that they are extremely anxious to be affiliated socially with white people. In this you are entirely

mistaken. The colored people have no desire to force themselves socially upon anybody. Social intercourse is a matter to be determined entirely by the individual choice. Each one is left free to choose his own associates. That is in accordance with reason and common sense. All white people are not on terms of social equality, as you well know, and it is a mere subterfuge, a mere dodging of the question touching the treatment of colored people, to lug that matter in here." The Continent adds: "Many phases of the race problem are not yet brought within range of unmistakable solution. But all of them will be much more easily dealt with, on a basis of fairness and fraternity all round when this foolish superstition is abandoned which supposes that colored fathers and mothers are seeking social access into white homes in order that their sons may have chance to win white wives and their daughters may be wooed by white lovers."

YOUNG people do not go to church these days, said a minister recently. We began to think of some of the many churches we know. In many of them, so far as we can tell, no effort is made to secure their attendance. When Sunday-school closes it is taken for granted that the children are going home. No effort is made by superintendent or teacher to induce them to attend the preaching service. It would be far better to make them feel that they are wanted and expected there. In some churches the preacher does not seem to consider the children, or even the young men and women, in the preparation or delivery of the sermon. Some preachers deliver a five minute sermon to the children, but we have never seen that this increases materially the attendance of the children. One preacher whom we know makes it a point to get acquainted with the children, interests them through the Sunday-school in attending the preaching service, has a record of their attendance kept, and then makes his preaching as simple and plain as possible, having at least some part of his sermon, it may be a story, simple enough for almost the youngest child to understand. The children go to hear him, and the older people enjoy his preaching.

SPEAKING of a friend one day a man said: "Johnson must be in very bad financial straits, for I see he is cutting down his contributions to Church causes, and I know that is the last place he would economize." He recognized his obligations to his Saviour as being more binding than the providing of luxuries or even comforts for himself and his family. The Lord's work is dependent upon what we do and what we give.

A FLORIST wanted his son who was in business with him to go to a great florist convention and flower show to be held in a distant city. The young man said he did not care to go, that he was working in flowers all the time and he did not care to see any more; and, besides, the trip would be an expensive one. But the father insisted that he should go, telling him to learn all he could, and to bring back any new ideas or new flowers that would help them in their business. He came back enthused, saying that he had learned more in a few days than he could have learned in a year at home, and that he had never before realized what the business of a florist really was. And he brought with him many new plants to add to their stock. There are some people who do not see the use of the meetings of the Church courts, or of religious conventions and conferences. Occasionally a preacher feels this way. The Christian who attends one of these gatherings of God's people will find that it is very profitable for his spiritual life. He will realize, as he never did before, what it means to be engaged in the work of the Master, and he will bring back with him many new ideas and much inspiration which will be of great value to him and his fellow Christians. Every church ought to see that its pastor and just as many of its members as possible attend such meetings at least once a year. Oftener would be better.

ONE argument against prohibition, especially used in California, has been that to stop the manufacture of wine will be to stop the raising of grapes. And it is claimed that this would be a great hardship to the grape growers. The fact is that there are other ways of disposing of grapes, for there is a great and increasing demand for fresh grapes and for raisins. But even if this were not true, there need be no loss to land owners. Stanford University owns great plantations in the grape growing sections of that state, large parts of which were in vineyards. But the trustees have found it much more profitable to raise alfalfa than grapes. No doubt parents will find it much more satisfactory to have their boys educated on the proceeds of alfalfa rather than of wine.

We need not be afraid of losing sight of the next world by living for our own and the next generation. The land that is very far off, and those who have gone thither before us, will never seem nearer to us than when Christian charity, in its most concrete practical form, has become the ruling principle of our lives. "We know that we have passed from death unto life," says St. John, "because we love the brethren."—W. R. Inge.